

S

A C C O U N T

OF SOME LATE

ATTEMPTS by the CORRESPONDENTS

OF THE

SOCIETY for propagating Christian Knowledge,

To Christianize the North American INDIANS.



EDINBURGH:

Printed in the Year M,DCC,LXIII.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following papers will give the public some general view, what appearances there are, that the *British* conquests in *North America* may be improved, for diffusing among the Heathen nations there, the light of the glorious gospel of Christ: These accounts, imperfect as they are, it is hoped, will excite the prayers and endeavours of many, that the Redeemer may have the Heathen for a heritage, and the uttermost ends of the earth for a possession.

The collection appointed by the last General Assembly, is designed to assist the board of correspondents at *Boston*, (who hitherto have had no assistance from *Scotland*) in carrying on their extensive plans for Christianizing the *Indians*.

To assist their correspondents at *New York*, in the same good work, The *Society for propagating Christian Knowledge*, allow yearly salaries to Mr *John Brainard*, Missionary to the *Delaware Indians*, to Mr *Occum*, Missionary to the *Oneyda Indians*; and for educating some *Indian* youths at the College of *New Jersey*. This is all that the state of their funds, and their many demands at home can admit, till further pious donations enable them to enlarge their plan. When these are received, they shall be faithfully applied to the particular purposes directed by the Donors.

An account by the Rev. Mr *Wheelock*, of his *Indian* school at *Lebanon* in *Connecticut*, and some other papers belonging to the Society, which were intended to have been published, cannot be found.

It is earnestly entreated, that if any Gentlemen have borrowed the above, or any other papers belonging to the Society, from Mr *Ross*, their late Clerk, they will be so good as return them to *A. Stevenson*, now Clerk to the Society, without delay, there being several papers of consequence amissing, besides the above mentioned.

A C C O U N T

OF SOME LATE

ATTEMPTS to Christianize the

North American Indians.

Part of a LETTER from the Rev. Mr David
Bostwick Minister at New York, to the Preses of
the Committee of Directors of the Society for propaga-
ting Christian Knowledge, dated 23d September 1761.

A VERY considerable tribe of Indians called the Oney-
das, because they reside nigh the Oneyda lake, (far
in the north-west parts of this government, and in
the wa^{ter} to Oswego,) meeting last campaign, at the re-
duction of Canada, with one of our provincial chaplains, sig-
nified to him their earnest desire of a Minister to come and
reside among them. On receiving intelligence of this, I im-
mediately wrote to Mr Samson Occum, a native Indian, whose
heart the Lord has been pleased to seize by his efficacious
grace, who was educated in the Rev. Mr Wheelock's school
in Connecticut, licenced to preach by an association in New
England, and since ordained by a Presbytery on Long Island,
where he had preached to a small number of these Indians,
once under the care of Mr Azariah Horton, formerly the
Society's Missionary there. The heart of this man has long
been set on a mission among the Indians, and once he was
actually engaged by a Society in London to go among the
Chirokees. But they soon joining with the French in hostili-
ties against us, he was prevented. On receiving my Letter, he
immediately concluded to visit the Oneydas, and make a trial:
Came to this city on his way some time in June, preached in
my pulpit to the most crowded audience I ever saw, and to
general acceptance. A collection was made for his journey

of above L. 75 currency. The Correspondents residing in this city, wrote to General *Anberst*, then at *Albany*, to furnish Mr *Occum* with a pass, and with recommendations to the commanding officers of the several posts on the road; which the General very readily complied with. Letters were also wrote to Sir *William Johnson*, the Superintendent of *Indian* affairs, begging that he would recommend Mr *Occum* to the *Oneydas* as a Minister; which he did. Thus forwarded, he arrived at the *Oneyda* lake, the latter end of June.

He has met with a very favourable reception; perhaps the more so, on account of his being an *Indian*. He writes, That there are four considerable towns on the *Oneyda* lake: That they have already built a house for religious worship, where he preaches every Lord's day: That he has baptized five or six persons this summer; and that there are many adjacent tribes, among whom he intends to make excursions. He has retained his mother-tongue, and can speak the language of his own tribe, (which is the *Mohegon*) something better than he can the *English*. But the *Oneyda* language differs so much from the *Mohegon*, that he is obliged to use an interpreter for the present, tho' doubtless he would learn their language well in a little time, could he reside among them. He is married to an *Indian* woman, who is also esteemed truly pious, and has six children, with whom he would gladly dwell in that wilderness, if he could be supported as a Missionary, and very easily might his children be educated in that language.—He well understands the business of farming, having chiefly supported his family by it, while he preached to the little handful of *Indians* upon *Long Island*; and therefore, could instruct the *Indians* in cultivating their lands, which are very good. He has acquired a tolerable acquaintance with *Latin*, *Greek* and *Hebrew*, with the sciences, &c. and is really a good Divine. His piety is unquestionable, having been manifested by a more than ten years exemplary conduct. His temper is very amiable and Christian like, full of humility and meekness. His heart is much set on preaching the gospel to the *Indians*, and he seems willing to spend and be spent, to do or suffer any thing for their conversion and salvation. In short, nothing is wanting to fix him there, but a support. He purposes to come down this autumn, and spend the winter with his family, (yet on *Long Island*), and 'tis likely he will try to remove his family to the *Oneyda* lake in the spring. We shall endeavour to support him by contribution, till some surer method can be found, or assistance be obtained from some charitable Society in *Scotland* or *England*. I therefore
humbly

humbly request, as this event has opened so agreeable a prospect for spreading the gospel among the Heathen, that the Society would receive Mr Occum as their Missionary, with proper instructions, and liberty to draw upon them for such salary as they shall fix; and would commit the management of said mission, to those of the Correspondents who reside in this city, as we are most convenient to write to, or receive intelligence from that part of the wilderness.

From the Rev. Mr Samuel Mather's Letter to Dr Wishart, dated Bolton, 23d August 1761.

I HAD lately some conversation with a plain well meaning person, who lived a few years among the *Oneyda Indians*, at a place called *Obonoquagie*, about 200 miles from *Philadelphia*. He tells me, that there are about 300 souls there: That the *Tuscororas* have two townships, each somewhat bigger than the *Oneyda*; and that about a hundred miles from this is the principal place of the *Oneyda*, which is considerable, and has a meeting-house built in it: That the people here are very desirous of Missionaries among them: That one *Peter* an *Oneyda Indian*, (instructed a few years ago by Mr *Halley*, then a Missionary), has taken a deal of pains to instruct them in Christian knowledge; and that he behaves well, and has done good among them, and when he performs divine service, they generally go to meeting: That about 16 miles to the west of *Obonoquagie*, there are 200 *Indians*, who generally talk *English*, and who have an *Indian* teacher, who knows but little, tho' he seems well disposed. These *Indians* seem well prepared for an *English* Missionary; and they learn, by *Indians* from the further parts, that they also are desirous of being instructed in Christian knowledge.

From Dr Chauncy's Sermon, on Occasion of Mr Bowman's Ordination as a Missionary to the Mohawk Indians, preached at Bolton, 31st Augy. 1762.

THE providence of God, by so succeeding his *Britannic* Majesty's arms, as to put *Canada* into *English* hands, seems evidently to point our view to the numerous *Indian* tribes, in our western parts, making it our duty to endeavour to carry the gospel to them; since that, which

has all along been the "let," is now "taken out of the way." And may I not say, that the Spirit of grace concurs with divine providence in calling upon us to exert ourselves in all wise methods, within our respective spheres, that "God's King in Sion" may have these "uttermost parts of the earth for his possession?" To what else can we so justly attribute the serious concern, relative to the spreading the gospel among these *Indians*, which has been so generally awakened in the minds of people, upon occasion of the marvellous victories the right hand of the Most High has given us over our *French* enemies, subjecting their country to the crown of *England*? Never did there appear before so strong and general a disposition to encourage the sending "the word of salvation" to them.

'Tis in consequence of this good disposition, and the charitable effects of it, that we have now two Missionaries in the *Mohawk* country; one, the worthy pastor of the church at Brookfield, who is gone for a time only: The other, a promising young man, who went with a view to spend his life in the service, if God should be pleased to give any comfortable prospect of success. We have lately heard from them, and the news they send us is such as will give joy to all who truly love the Redeemer, and dispose them to open their lips in praises to God.

They write, "that, soon after their arrival at *Onoquage*, "they assembled the chief men of the tribe in this "place, informing them of their business, and by whom "they were sent: That, with great solemnity, they "returned their hearty thanks to the honourable com- "missioners, and to them for undertaking so difficult and "arduous a work.—But, as three of their principal men "were absent, they concluded with saying, they spake "and acted only for themselves and families; adding, that "when these three should return, they would meet again, "when they should be glad to hear again of this matter, "and would return a more compleat answer. Upon the "whole, they all appeared very cordial, as well as thankful."

Mr *Forbes* writes in another Letter, "The *Indians* appear "very cordial and well-disposed. The last Sabbath, (the "Sabbath preceeding the 29th of June,) we had a very full "and attentive assembly, as devout as ever I saw, and pro- "perly raised with a well-tempered zeal. The whole as- "sembly was moved,—many discovered a deep sorrow for "sin, and were all attention to the word spoken. Some "wept and covered their faces. In short, it seemed as if "God was moving by his Spirit upon the whole assembly.

"On

"On Monday we visited most of the families in town, conversed with the heads of them upon the things of religion, and exhorted the youth and children to the practising early piety. We found several under a very serious concern about their souls and the future world, and very desirous to know what they should do to be saved. Others we found, (it is to be remarked here, Mr *Hawley* had spent some time with this tribe of *Indians* before the war), well established in the Christian faith, and zealously engaged in the practice of sober godliness.—Every thing looks encouraging here on the part of the beneficent design of our mission; and I can't but think, (if we are not greatly wanting) that great things might be effected in favour of the Redeemer's kingdom."

He writes in another Letter still, The *Indians* "desire to have a church gathered, and to have the sacrament of the Lord's supper administered before I leave them. I have discoursed with a number with this view, and find that several are well established in the essential doctrines of Christianity, and have an uniform practical sense of religion upon their minds.—We have set up a school here, * at which we

* The *Indian*-children might be instructed in their own towns at much less expence, than if they were brought to live among us. The cost of bringing them would be very considerable; and they must be permitted every now-and-then to make a visit to their parents and friends, which would be a great additional charge. They must also be boarded and clothed, which would run the expence very high. Whereas, if they were taught where they now live, they might be maintained by their parents; and the only charge worth mentioning would be that of supporting school-masters. More, it may be, would be required for the support of instructors among the *Indians*, than among ourselves; but this greater charge would be small in comparison with the charge the other way. And the children might, in their own towns, as conveniently come to school, as if they were among us; for the *Indian* wigwams are every where nearer to one another, than the *English* houses in any of our villages. One school in a town would therefore very well answer all the ends we have in view, as none of the towns are so large, but the children in all of them might easily meet together every day for instruction. For these reasons, one of the principal things entrusted with our Missionaries is, to endeavour to prepare the way for setting up schools for the education of *Indian* children, in whatever it may be proper to instruct them. And by thus providing for their instruction, we shall avoid much needless expence. The education of one *Indian* lad among us will probably cost more than the education of twenty in their own country.

" we are instructing the children in the knowledge of the
 " *English* language. We have had about a dozen a day for
 " about twenty days, and find the children are very much
 " pleased with it, and give their constant and season-
 " able attendance, without any constraint from their parents.
 " Some of them make surprising proficiency, pronounce the
 " whole alphabet well, and know each letter; and four
 " have got to pronounce distinct syllables properly. They
 " appear to be, in general, very promising children. The
 " inhabitants are vastly pleased, that two of our lads * are
 " come to be with them to learn their language; and have,
 " of their own accord, offered three of their's, whom they
 " would send to *New England* to learn our language; but I
 " told them, I must wait the pleasure of the Commissioners,
 " before I could give any encouragement to take them with
 " me." † He adds, " We have got all our matters ripe to
 " make

country. And they may, if it be not our own fault, be as well
 educated there, as here; at least till they are fitted for the higher
 instruction, which there would be no need of giving to more than
 one in an hundred.

* These lads are about 12 years of age, and as promising as
 any among us. They are, with their own free consent, devoted
 to the *Indian*-service for life, if God, in his providence, shall please
 to make way for their being useful. 'Tis designed they should con-
 tinue with the *Indians*, till they have learned their language.
 Care is taken that they may be under proper tuition in the *Indian*
 country; and when they can converse in their tongue with the
 same freedom as in their own, they will be brought from thence,
 and put under the best means of education we have, in order to
 their being qualified for missionary preachers, or school-masters, or
 whatever else they may be most turned for. I may add, besides
 these lads, we have a young man under education at our College in
Cambridge, who will, we trust, be fit for service, as a school-ma-
 ster, if not as a Missionary-preacher, as soon as there will be occa-
 sion for him.

† We have not encouraged the sending these boys; and, as we
 imagine, for very good reasons. The charge of bringing them
 from their own homes, and educating them among us, would be
 very great. We have felt the truth of this, as we lately found our-
 selves obliged to pay nearly L. 60 Sterling in less than one year for
 three boys only: On which account we thought ourselves bound,
 in faithfulness to those who have entrusted their money with us,
 not to spend any more of it in this way, which appears to us e-
 normously expensive. There are other inconveniences in taking lads
 from the *Indian*-country;—We can have no security, whatever
 expence is laid out upon them, that they shall be afterwards em-
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"make proposals to the *Indians*, and wait only the return
"of *Adam* their chief, who is now expected. The *Indians*
"are of a very obliging disposition, and well-disposed to-
"ward religion.—*Thomas King* made a speech in the name
"of two or three, (who had not been present at any of their
"former councils) in which he expressed a very grateful
"sense of the care the Commissioners have taken of the most
"important interest among them, and, for his own part, he
"greatly rejoiced that they were once more likely to enjoy
"the gospel. He was ready to promise all that lay in his power,
"that the glorious design should meet with success.—He
"wanted some more effectual measures might be taken to
"prevent the sin of drunkenness; and hoped, till some way
"was found out, we would pity and pray for them; for they
"were so addicted to that sin, that they could not refrain
"when *Rum* was brought among them.—All the Chiefs
"are desirous, that some effectual way be taken that no *Rum*
"be brought among them; for they say, they plainly see,
"that *Rum* is destructive both to soul and body."

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and inclination to learn, are such as we should choose in the child-
ren we would be at the charge to educate; and after all the pains
and expence in educating them, they may be viciously turned, or
their character otherwise such as would unfit them to be employed
by us in the service for which they might be especially intended and
wanted. Whereas, by educating *Indian*-children in their own
towns, these inconveniencies will be avoided. The charge will
be reduced to a small thing comparatively:—we may select out of
a whole school the most promising youth for natural powers, good
temper, and a pious disposition; and we might get security from
their parents, that they shall be employed in the service their edu-
cation is designed to fit them for.—Besides all this, *English* lads
will be far the likeliest, when their education is finished, to serve
as interpreters, school-masters, or missionary-preachers. *Indians*,
though fitted, in a good measure, for these employments, will not
have that honour in their own country, and among their own peo-
ple, which is highly expedient in order to their being useful; nor
can they with desirable confidence be relied on. Perhaps, two or
three *Indians* at most, and these such as have been found, upon
trial, to be steady, prudent, sober and virtuous, will suffice for all
the purposes to which we shall have occasion to employ them. A
school therefore for the education of *Indian*-children in any of our
English towns may reasonably be looked upon as a *needless burden*;
and, if encouraged, will run into an expence, which may soon cool
that charity which would be the support, not only of that, but of
all attempts to promote the spiritual good of those, whose lot is
cast in Heathen darkness.

T O A

From the Reverend Dr Chauncy's LETTER to
Mr Erskine, dated Boston, 29th October 1762.

IN addition to my sermon at Mr Bowman's ordination, I have to say, with reference to the *Indian* affair, that Mr Forbes, who is returned from his temporary Mission, informs us, that a church is gathered at *Ohonoquagie*, an *Indian* town on the banks of *Susquahanah* river, more than 400 miles from Boston. The church was constituted of 10 persons, 5 males and 5 females; and 3 have been added to them since. The Lord's Supper was once before he came away administered to them; and several of their children have been baptized. He thinks there is a hopeful prospect of doing service for Christ. Mr Bowman, after he had set out the week following his ordination for the *Indian* country, was seized with a violent fever, of which he was sick nigh unto death. But the Lord had mercy on him, and restored him to strength, so that he was able to proceed on his journey, after being detained at least six weeks. And I hope, before now, he has joined Mr Rice, his fellow worker in the kingdom and patience of Christ, to their mutual joy and satisfaction.

Mr Forbes is a gentleman excellently qualified for the *Indian* service. His natural powers are strong and lively, his acquired accomplishments very considerable. He has a good talent at knowing men, and adapting himself to their peculiar turns. He has, I believe, a truly pious soul: and is particularly filled with Christian compassion towards the poor *Indians*. And was he not related to one of our churches as their pastor, I have heard him say, he could, with all cheerfulness, devote himself to the service of the Saviour, among these unhappy people. I scarce know of a man like minded, and like spirited; and he is of a firm bodily make, fitting him to endure hardships of any kind. Was it the custom among us, as it is among you, to transfer the relation of a minister from one people to another, there would be no difficulty in taking him for the *Indian* service.

From Dr Chauncy's Letter to Mr Erskine, Nov. 2. 1762.

MR Forbes speaks highly of Peter, one of the chiefs at *Ohonoquagie*. He esteems him as eminent a christian as almost any he knows of among the *English*. And as this Peter can read and write, and has his heart much set upon the propagating Christian knowledge among the *Indians*, he thinks it would be an encouragement to him, and a service to the cause in general, if he might for the present be employed to teach the *Indian* children. 'Tis probable we shall fall in with this motion.

A C T

ACT of the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of the Church of Scotland,

CONCERNING

A GENERAL COLLECTION for the propagating of the GOSPEL among the *North American* *Indians.*

At Edinburgh, the 31st Day of May 1762.

THERE was transmittit to the General Assembly from the Committee for Bills, a Petition in Name of the Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge, to the following Effect:

“THE said Society did, in March 1760, commission a Number of Gentlemen in *New England*, as a Board of Correspondents, to plan and execute proper Schemes for spreading the Knowledge of the gospel among the *North American Indians.*

“These Gentlemen being sensible, that Ignorance of the *Indian* Language has proved one great Obstruction to this Design, have agreed to the following Plan: That a certain Number of *Indian* Youths, of promising Dispositions, be procured to come and live among them, in order to their learning the *English* Language, and being well instructed in the Principles of Religion, and in needful Literature: That, at the same Time, a like Number of *English* young Men, of a hopeful Genius, be sent to live among the *Indians*, in some of the best of their Families, till they become acquainted with their Language and Customs: after which they shall be recalled, and have their Education completed under the same Roof and Masters with the young *Indians*, and that, when both are sufficiently fitted for this important Service, they shall be sent out in Pairs by two and two, an *Indian* and a *New Englander*, to propagate Christian Knowledge among some other of the *Indian* Tribes. But as the Advantage proposed by this Plan cannot speedily take Place, they have further resolved, instantly to take into their Pay a few suitable qualified Missionaries, together with Interpreters, and to send them to such of the *Indian* Tribes, on their Western Borders, as seem best disposed to receive religious Instruction.

“As the Execution of these Schemes must necessarily require a considerable Expence, the said Correspondents have opened, in the Town of *Boston*, two Subscriptions; the one for an annual Sum, to enable them to begin their Work; the other for a capital Stock, payable on Condition that the Commissioners shall be erected into a Body corporate; In both which Subscriptions, they have met with uncommon Success, from the forward Disposition of their People to encourage so good a Design. They further have Reason to believe, That the General Court, or Assembly

of the Province, will assist for them a Collection through all their Churches, or grant them Aid from other Ways. But as, after all, they cannot expect to obtain near such a sum, as shall be sufficient for effectually prosecuting their extensive Plan, without the Assistance of their Mother-Country, they have solicited, though in the most modest Terms, the Society in Scotland for propagating Christian Knowledge, to apply in their Behalf to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

"The Society persuade themselves, that the Venerable Assembly will shew the most favourable Disposition towards an Undertaking, which so much concerns the Advancement of the Kingdom of CHRIST, in the dark Places of the Earth, that are full of the Habitations of Cruelty. The amazing Success, with which God has been pleased to bless the *British* Arms in those remote Parts, strongly pleads for our warmest Returns of Gratitude: And surely, no Testimony of our Thankfulness can be more particularly suitable, than improving the signal Advantage we had gained by these Conquests, for spreading the knowledge of God and of JESUS CHRIST, and promoting the best, the eternal Interests of Mankind. If *Britain* and her Colonies shall exert sufficient Vigour in this generous Design, it may be hoped, that Providence will preserve in our possession, for the good of the Conquered, as well as for our own Benefit, a considerable Part of these important Acquisitions: Certain it is, that nothing can tend more to secure to us the Affection of the *Indian* Tribes, and to lessen the Influence of the *French* over them, than the spreading among them our holy, Christian reformed religion.

"It is therefore hoped, that the Venerable Assembly will give all Encouragement to a design of such Importance to the Interests of Religion and of Mankind, and to the Peace and Prosperity of *Britain* and her Colonies; and will be pleased to grant such Assistance to it, by appointing a Collection to be made in the several Parish-Churches, or otherwise, as they shall think meet."

THE General Assembly having considered what is above represented, did unanimously agree to grant the Desire of the Society: And do accordingly appoint, That a General Collection be made in all the Parish-Churches of Scotland, for this most charitable Purpose: That the Money collected be transmitted to Mr *John Davidson* Writer to the Signet, and Treasurer to the said Society: That the Collection be made within the Bounds of the Presbytery of *Edinburgh*, on the first Sabbath of *February* next; and by the other Presbyteries, on a Day to be named by them, such as they shall judge most proper for answering the Design, betwixt and the first of *April* next. And the several Presbyteries are hereby required to make Report to their respective Synods, concerning their Observance of this appointment. And the General Assembly ordains this Act to be read from the Pulpits of the several Churches, on the Lord's Day immediately preceeding the Day appointed for the Collection, with suitable Exhortations. Extracted by

GEORGE WISHART, *Ch. Sec. Scot.*

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